



## **TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE**

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## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

### **One-of-a-kind Texas State Veterans Home open for business**

Watkins-Logan-Garrison Texas State Veterans Home dedicated with great fanfare

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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AUSTIN — Generations of veterans gathered today in Tyler to dedicate the newest and most down-home state veterans' home in Texas.

"Watkins-Logan-Garrison Texas State Veterans Home is a one-of-a-kind facility," said Texas Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson, chairman of the Veterans Land Board. "This home is nothing less than a model for the future of long-term care."

What makes Watkins-Logan-Garrison Texas State Veterans Home stand out is that it's the only state veterans' home in Texas that consists of 10 cottages — each centered around an open kitchen — and one common building.

"The kitchen is the heart of any home," Patterson said. "Instead of one large, hospital-like facility, Watkins-Logan-Garrison Texas State Veterans Home draws residents together around the dinner table every day, just like at home."

Relatives of the home's namesake heroes joined Patterson for the dedication. They included Jason Branch, the grandson of Sgt. Travis Earl Watkins; Paul Logan, the son of Sgt. James Marion Logan; and Mrs. Willie Garrison, the widow of Capt. Samuel M. Garrison.

Smith County Judge Joel Baker hosted the dedication ceremony, which was attended by numerous state and local elected officials who worked together to make Watkins-Logan-Garrison Texas State Veterans Home possible. John Garcia, deputy assistant secretary for Intergovernmental Affairs for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, was keynote speaker.

Tyler's Texas State Veterans Home was built on 20 acres donated by the University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler with 65 percent of the construction costs paid for with a grant from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and 35 percent with a grant from the VLB. Watkins-Logan-Garrison joins seven other Texas State Veterans Homes across the state in Amarillo, Big Spring, Bonham, El Paso, Floresville, McAllen and Temple.

The whole approach at Watkins-Logan-Garrison Texas State Veterans Home is revolutionary for veterans' long-term care in Texas.

An open kitchen, dining room and large table are at the heart of each of the 10 cottages. Family-style meals will be served at the table and residents can enjoy each other's company afterward in a large living room with a fireplace. This simple idea of having each cottage designed to feel like a home — not an institution — is what sets Watkins-Logan-Garrison Texas State Veterans Home apart from the rest.

A total of 10 private rooms, each with its own bathroom, will flank the hearth. Each cottage will be set up as a "non-lift" facility, where overhead tracks with slings in each resident's room will provide safe transport of non-ambulatory residents from bed to bath.

Watkins-Logan-Garrison Texas State Veterans Home was named in honor of three local heroes, two Medal of Honor recipients and a Tuskegee airman: Travis Earl Watkins, James Marion Logan and Samuel M. Garrison.

Watkins, a master sergeant, served in the U.S. Army, Company H, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for action near Yongsan, Korea in 1950. He was awarded the Bronze Star during World War II for action during the Guadalcanal campaign. His home of record and burial is Gladewater, Texas.

Logan, a technical sergeant, served in the Army, 36th Infantry Division. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on September 9, 1943 in the vicinity of Salerno, Italy. In addition to receiving the Distinguished Service Cross, he was the first living recipient to receive the Texas Medal of Honor. Logan lived in Kilgore prior to his death in 1999 and is buried at the Texas State Cemetery in Austin.

Garrison, a captain, received his training at the Tuskegee Army Airfield in Tuskegee, Alabama and served in the first all-black Air Corps Fighter Squadron, the 99th Pursuit Squadron. Garrison earned two Silver Stars and two Bronze Stars. He lived in Tyler until his death in May 2011.

Texas State Veterans Homes offer a broad spectrum of health care services, comprehensive rehabilitation programs, special diets, recreational activities, social services, libraries, and certified, secured Alzheimer's units, each with its own secured outdoor courtyard.

For additional information on Texas State Veterans Homes, please call 1-800-252-VETS (8387) or visit the Texas Veterans Land Board website at [www.texasveterans.com](http://www.texasveterans.com) . Or, find us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/TXVLB> .

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